out and try to communicate to more people across West Virginia and the Nation, in Kentucky and Illinois, to Montana, to California, to demonstrate to them that you are already using coal. You are getting the advantages of coal.

Work with us to get the clean coal technology so that we can cut down our emissions. The idea of shutting off coal is short-sighted, and the rest of the world isn't following.

Someone said about leadership: You know, if no one is following you, then all you are doing is a man taking a walk.

So we have to find people that can lead. We have groups that are willing to take this on and fight for coal, fight for the jobs and the people that are affected by this.

So I thank you all for coming out here tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1994, VA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2015, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3236, SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AND VETERANS HEALTH CARE CHOICE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2015

Mr. SESSIONS (during the Special Order of Mr. MCKINLEY) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114–234) on the resolution (H. Res. 388) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1994) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3236) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, to provide resource flexibility to the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care services, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT SOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, we had a most interesting discussion on coal. Let's continue on with natural resources for a few moments here.

I represent a good portion of the State of California. I put this map up as an opportunity for interested parties to observe what is happening in the State of California.

We are well into the fourth year of our drought in California. You can see from this map, in 2003, we had a serious drought, the yellow.

We are now looking at July 1, 2014. The yellow is now just a small part of the State of California, meaning it is still serious.

It is mostly out in the delta, out in the desert and in southern California, Imperial Valley, part of San Diego, Riverside, and San Bernardino County.

And there is a little bit of drought up here in the far north, north coast area, in Del North County.

The red and the brown, that is really, really serious. So California is really in a very serious state of hurt at the moment.

The drought is severe. It is having an enormous impact not just in the San Joaquin Valley, but really throughout the entire State of California.

Twenty-five percent water reduction is mandated by the State for the entire State. And so, in southern California, central California, northern California, that dramatic reduction in the consumption of water is well underway.

I live here in the central part, in the delta of California, which I will talk about at some length.

Three weeks ago this House passed legislation to address this issue, the Valadao bill. What it really was all about was a relaxation of the environmental protections and, thereby, a mechanism to basically take what water remains in northern California here in the Sacramento Valley and transport it down into the San Joaquin Valley here.

It is basically the classic water grab, which we have seen so much of over the years.

While all of that talk is going on here in Washington, D.C., what is happening is that California is doing what it has done so very well, and that is mine not coal, which we heard about from our colleagues from the coal states, but, rather, mine water.

This map basically shows what is happening in the aquifers of California. In June of 2002, you see a lot of green. The aquifers, while still depleted, were thought to be in pretty good shape.

In 2008, as a result of expansion of agriculture in cities and communities throughout California, the mining of water was going on so much so that we are now beginning to see these yellow and brown areas show up.

As the drought continued on from 2008 to 2014, we are beginning to see the very severe overdraft of the aquifers of California. Will these aquifers rebound when the rains return? Perhaps.

But we also know that many of them will not. And the result of this extraordinary overdrafting of the aquifers in California will place in jeopardy many, many communities, agricultural communities as well as the human communities.

We know that down here in the San Joaquin Valley along the eastern side communities are simply out of water.

The aquifers have been mined, overdrafted, to the point where there is no more ability to draw from the aquifers, and these communities are out of water today.

Extraordinary efforts are underway to provide these communities, many of whom are low-income communities with very little resources of their own, unable to dig deeper wells to provide themselves with water.

So part of the bill that passed 3 weeks ago attempted to address this, but in a very insufficient way.

There are alternatives. There are ways that California can and must deal with the drought, and they basically are short term, immediate, and long term.

That legislation has been introduced. I draw the attention to the Huffman bill, which is a comprehensive effort to deal with California's both short-term and long-term efforts.

I also draw attention to the Napolitano bill and basically draw your attention to how it should not be done, which was the Valadao bill.

Now, action is underway in the Senate. Our Senator, DIANNE FEINSTEIN, is about to introduce legislation. We have not had a chance to see the full legislation.

We do know that some of the Huffman bill is introduced into it, and we know that some of the Napolitano bill is also introduced.

I want to deal with those opportunities that present themselves and, at the same time, suggest that the Valadao bill should not be passed.

There is no need to push aside the environmental laws. There is no need to waive the California constitution and the water rights system in the constitution as the Valadao bill does. It is hidden, but it is there.

So what I want to really talk about is how we can address the California water needs. I call this the little sip/big gulp strategy. It is a proposal that I made some 3 years ago and continue to work on. It is a water plan for all of California.

It is similar to a program put out by the California administration, not for tunnels, not the California water fix, not the BDCP—all of those programs are simply a way to transfer water—but, rather, what we call a water fix, a water plan, for all of California.

Basically, what it involves is a mechanism to provide water for the growing population of California for the agricultural areas, Sacramento and San Joaquin, called the Great Central Valley, for the urban regions here in the bay area and down in southern California.

I will go through it very, very quickly.

Let's talk about southern California. Basically, it now takes water from northern California from the Colorado River. It brings water into the southern California area, where it is consumed.

After being cleaned, it is consumed. It is cleaned yet again, and a great amount of water is dumped then into the Pacific Ocean.

You say: Wait a minute. You mean to tell me they are taking water from northern California 400 or 500 miles from the Colorado River, bringing it into southern California, cleaning it, using it once, and then dumping it into the ocean?

The answer is yes. That is exactly what has happened, so much so that what I think is probably the fifth biggest river on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere is, in fact, the sanitation plants in southern California.

So the first option would be to recycle that water. That is very much a part of the Napolitano bill, as well as the Huffman bill: recycling. Use the water that is already there. Clean it and reuse it.

This is actually happening in Orange County down here. Orange County has one of the largest recycling programs anywhere in the United States. Good for them. But that much more can be done.

For maybe a billion dollars, a billion and a half dollars, you may be able to get 500,000 acre-feet of new water that is already in southern California.

So that is the recycling: San Diego, southern California, the great Los Angeles Basin, as well as the great San Francisco area.

Here in Sacramento a major recycling program is now underway by the Sacramento Regional Sanitation District. Good for them.

That water will be reused, some of it in the Sacramento area, the rest of it put back in the river as clean water and then available for environmental purposes in the bay as well as for the San Joaquin Valley and, indeed, all the way to Los Angeles.

So recycling is very, very much a part of the future of California.

A lot of people talk about desalinization. Yes, certainly there is now a desalinization plant that is opening that will be producing a significant amount of water down here in Carlsbad in San Diego County. There is also a desalinization plant in the Santa Barbara area.

□ 1945

Those are important. However, desalinization is far more expensive than recycling. The recycled water turns out to be quite cleaner than the ocean water. It doesn't have all the salts and other contaminants because it has already been significantly cleaned in the sanitation process—so recycling.

The most important and most immediate and, frankly, underway, as I said, 25 percent reduction in water consumption required in California now, that is called conservation. Clearly, conservation is the simplest, least expensive, and the largest source of water for the future.

Conservation is taking place by mandate now, but also a great deal of conservation is taking place in the agricultural areas up and down the coast as well as the agricultural areas in the Monterey Bay area and, actually, everywhere in California.

As much as has been done in the years leading to this moment, more can and must be done in conservation, both urban as well as agriculture. Perhaps estimates by the State government indicate somewhere between 3 and 5 million acre-feet of water can be saved through a very robust conservation program up and down the State.

Once again, this is in the Democratic legislation that has been put forth by Ms. NAPOLITANO as well as by Mr. HUFFMAN. A major and very, very important element in California water future is a continuation of this conservation program.

So you have recycling; you could do desalinization in certain places; and, thirdly, conservation, with conservation being the single biggest and the most inexpensive of all of the options.

There are things that need to be done. Money needs to be made available, Federal Government grants as well as State and local government, and participation by farmers and communities up and down the State.

Thirdly, we need to develop more storage. Here is where the twin tunnel concept that is being pushed by Governor Brown and the administration makes no sense at all. I want to put up a map that displays this a little better. I am going to go to the really big map here because this really needs to be understood.

This is a picture of the delta of California. It is an inland delta. It is the largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere. It is basically this entire region here. Sacramento is up here; Stockton is here; Contra Costa County, Pittsburg, Antioch down here; and then San Francisco Bay begins right in this area.

So what we have here is this inland delta. The San Joaquin River comes up from the south. The Sacramento River, the largest river in California, flows from the north all the way from the Oregon border, Mt. Shasta, flows down through the Sacramento Valley, past the city of Sacramento, and comes in and joins the San Joaquin River in the delta of California.

I have had the pleasure to live in this area for the last 40 years and represent this area for, well, since 1974 in one way or another. It is an extraordinary ecological system. The largest estuary, it is the nursery for dozens of different species of salmon and other fish. It is extremely important for the ecology not just of the delta, but also of the entire West Coast. It is from this area that the salmon go out to sea, providing thousands upon thousands of jobs and recreational opportunities—other species, in this area, of fish. It is also a major flyway for the waterfowl that migrate north and south through the area.

It is also a very rich agricultural area, several hundred thousand acres of agricultural land, and provides enormous recreational opportunities with more than a thousand miles of rivers, sloughs, and waterways of various kinds.

It is in trouble. It is in serious jeopardy because of the transfer of water from the north through the delta to the great pumps here at Tracy that could pump up to 15,000 cubic feet of water per second out of these pumps, sending that to the San Joaquin Valley here, and then on into Los Angeles.

This is the hub, and this is where the controversy exists. What the Governor wants to do is to start up here in one of the richest agricultural areas in all of America and basically create two, three intakes and two massive tunnels that come all the way down here to the pumps, in the process destroying a lot of the agricultural land. The pumps are big enough. These tunnels are capable of carrying 15,000 cubic feet of water per second; and with intakes that are at 9,000, you add another intake, you can get the full 15,000.

Keep in mind, the Sacramento River flowing past Freeport, Sacramento, flows at somewhere around 15,000 cubic feet per second water into the Sacramento and into the delta. So this system that the Governor wants to build is big enough to literally drain the freshwater from the delta, destroying this extraordinary ecological system, the largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere.

So we say to the Governor, why would you build something that has such destructive capacity? A recent report that was done on the economic benefits of this—remember, it is about $15 billion to build these two tunnels and the intakes and the pumps that go with it, about $15 billion. The economic analysis that was recently published in the Sacramento Bee said, well, wait a minute, the total economic benefit of all of this is like $5 billion over the lifetime of the tunnels. That is 50 years. You are spending $15 billion in the next decade or so, and you are only going to get $5 billion of economic benefit? It doesn't make much sense.

The other thing that is so foolish about this proposal is there is no storage. There is no storage north of the delta. There is no storage south of the delta. There is no storage in the delta. So where are you going to put the water? It is really nonsense.

So what we are saying is don't waste $15 billion or $17 billion here. Don't set up a system that could destroy the ecology of the delta and the agriculture of the delta and put at risk the communities that rely upon the freshwater. Don't do that.

There is a better option that is available. We call that the little sip/big gulp.

First of all, fix the levees. Fix the levees, the key levees that allow for the transport of water through the delta that protect the communities of the delta, that protect the flow of water as well as the agriculture. Probably less than a billion dollars and you could armor these levees. You could

upgrade those levees to maintain the current flow of water, when necessary, through the delta to the pumps, and at the same time protect communities such as Stockton and the communities down here in the Contra Costa area. That is the first thing. That gives you about half of the water that would be needed.

So where does the other half come from? The other half is what I call the little sip. I think you can see this on the map. This is the Sacramento deepwater shipping channel. It actually intersects the Sacramento River way up here in Sacramento, taking water, a little bit of water into the shipping channel and coming down here to a community called Rio Vista. About 40 percent of a system is already in existence.

If you were to put a fish screen here at the opening on the Sacramento River, allowing 3,000 cubic feet per second of water to flow into the shipping channel, down the shipping channel, capture that water way down here where the shipping channel ends, there are levees on either side of the channel. Capture the water there, and then bring the water across to Old River, which is right here. Bring that water across to Old River, and it goes then to the pumps here at Tracy.

So what you have here is a mechanism which we call the little sip, 3,000 cubic feet per second, big enough to be operated virtually every day of the year in a normal water year—not this year with the severe drought, but in a normal water year.

Oh, by the way, you could not operate the big tunnels, either. So this big project that the Governor wants to propose could not be used this year because there simply isn't water in the river.

But this little project in most every year, both the low flow as well as the high flow in the average year, could take that 3,000 cfs every day, bringing it down to the pumps here at Tracy, delivering 2 million acre-feet of water every year. That is the little sip.

When you have the big rain flows, which we hope to have in the future, and actually did have twice this year, you could turn the big pumps on down here, and you could take the rest of the 2 million or 2½ million acre-feet, giving you the 4½ million acre-feet that is desired to flow south to southern California and to the San Joaquin Valley. Little sip/big gulp.

You have, in fact, protected the delta because you are going to have to maintain the levees, bring them up to code so that they are 100-, 200-year flood levees, and you have set up a mechanism that could not destroy the delta because it is only 3,000 cubic feet per second coming out of the Sacramento River way up high. You avoid all of the destruction that would occur in the Clarksburg-Courtland area up here, that would occur as a result of the three intakes or four intakes that would be built on the Sacramento River, and all of the disruption that would occur as you build these two massive tunnels.

These tunnels are 40 feet in diameter. We are talking about, well, actually higher than this ceiling here in the Chamber. This is probably like 30 feet to the ceiling. But it would be 40 feet, two massive tunnels, 40 feet in diameter, that would be drilled down through the delta, through some of the most complex soils anywhere in the United States, disrupting all of this area and creating the opportunity for an existential threat to the delta because they are so big and can take so much water.

What would this cost? Maybe a third, maybe less than a third, maybe a quarter, because so much of it is already built. You already have the channel all the way down to here. You would have about a 10- to 12-mile pipeline across the delta into the Old River or a new canal built along the Old River to the pumps at Tracy. It makes a lot of sense.

The rest of the money, perhaps another $10 billion or $12 billion that would be otherwise spent on the massive twin tunnels could then be used for storage systems south of the delta.

Let me put this down for a second and put up the map of California. Where would those storage systems be?

Here is the delta once again. South of the delta there is a reservoir here called San Luis. It needs to be repaired because of earthquake potential. You can expand that. Just to the south, you have Los Banos Grandes Creek. That would be Los Banos Grandes Reservoir. There are numerous reservoirs that could be built along the California aqueduct as it comes into the Central Valley.

Most important of all are the aquifers. Remember this: The aquifers of the Central Valley are seriously overdrafted. These are the major storage reservoirs of California. So as water is brought out of the delta, we need to make sure that that water is put in surface storage reservoirs where possible, San Luis, maybe Los Banos Grandes. Los Vaqueros Reservoir here in Contra Costa County needs to be upgraded, added to. So you have these surface storage reservoirs that are certainly going to be necessary, and most important of all, you have got the aquifers.

As we look to the future, we need to figure out the hydrological systems to bring water through the canals when it is available and recharge the aquifers of the San Joaquin Valley. Some of them will not be able to be recharged. They are gone. Once you drain those aquifers, they may never be able to recover. But some could be recovered, and those are the ones we need to identify, and we need to recharge them.

Similarly, in the Sacramento Valley, north of the delta, there are several storage opportunities available to us. Some of these have been studied.

Way up here is the largest reservoir in California, the Shasta Reservoir. There is talk—and it has been studied—to raise the dam and increase the capacity perhaps by 130,000 acre-feet of yield here at Shasta. Further south, not on the river, but an off-river reservoir called Sites Reservoir, which my Republican colleague, Mr. LAMALFA, and I are authoring legislation to build Sites Reservoir, which would take water during the flood flows on the Sacramento off stream, pump it into this reservoir, a very large reservoir, about 1.9 million acre-feet, and that water would then be available to be put back into the Sacramento River for export to the south or for salinity control, freshwater into the San Francisco Bay, and also would create the opportunity for the reoperation, that is, to work in conjunction with Folsom Reservoir here in Sacramento, the Feather River Reservoir, the Oroville Dam and Reservoir, and the reoperation of the Shasta as well as the Yuba reservoirs.

□ 2000

In other words, this would great flexibility to the way in which we would then be able to operate the Sacramento River system for the benefit of the environment, for the benefit of exports to the southern valley—San Joaquin Valley, as well as southern California—and for salinity control in the environment of the delta. At the same time, like the San Joaquin Valley, there are enormous aquifers here in the Sacramento Valley that need to be maintained and recharged so that what we could build, if we thought about it in this holistic way, we would build a system that would be conjunctive use, so that when there was a lot of water, we would store that water. We would store it in off-stream reservoirs. We would store in an expanded Shasta. We would store it in the underground aquifers of the San Joaquin Valley or in the reservoirs along the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, as well as in southern California.

When you recycle in southern California, you could then store that water in the aquifers that exist here in the Los Angeles and the southern California basin. These aquifers actually have greater capacity than the Shasta Reservoir.

So you have got the aquifer of the San Fernando. You have got the aquifer of the San Gabriel, the San Bernardino, Orange County, West Basin, and several other smaller aquifers in the Los Angeles Basin. Of course, there are others as you move south towards San Diego.

That is the storage system that you would then use in a conjunctive water management program. This is the holistic approach that we need to look at. I call it the little sip in the delta. Build a small facility—3,000 is not small—3,000 cubic feet per second facility, taking that water out of the Sacramento River at Sacramento; put it into the deepwater shipping channel—the Sacramento channel all the way down here just north of Rio Vista—take it across

the delta, put it in a canal into Old River to the pumps, 3,000. The remaining water would be taken out of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta when it is available, when the delta smelt and other fish are not at the pumps, and turn the pumps on, sending that water south to be stored or used in the aquifers stored in new surface storage reservoirs along the way. Of course, north of the delta, you would have the surface storage reservoir at Sites and perhaps the enlargement of Shasta, then the ability to use it.

So why don't we do it? For the $15 billion that the Governor wants to spend on digging two tunnels that do not create 1 gallon of new water, but do create an existential threat to the largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere. Don't waste your money. Don't spend $15 billion on a $5 billion benefit—and that is over 50 years.

Why would you ever make that investment when you could do something that creates water, creates perhaps as much as 5 million acre-feet of new water for California's future, water that would be available from recycling and storage in southern California aquifers, available from storage north of the delta, the replenishment of the aquifers in the great Central Valley of California, and the creation of new storage surface reservoirs along the way? And most important, conservation—we have to conserve. It is mandated now. It is part of our future.

This is a water plan for all California. These ideas are not new. I didn't dream them up, although I put them together. And interestingly enough, 3½ years ago, when I made this first proposal, about a year later the Governor and the Department of Water Resources put forth a paper called a Water Action Plan for California, and it is exactly the same—without the tunnels.

Their Water Action Plan didn't speak to the tunnels. It did speak to storage north of the delta; it did speak to conservation; it did speak to the aquifers; it did speak to desalinization and recycling—all of those things that have been in the water plan for California for about 30 years.

This is not new. I have been involved in these issues since the 1970s, and I know that if we were to back away from the twin tunnel proposal, which is so destructive of the delta, and went to the little sip/big gulp strategy, using all of the various mechanisms available to California, we could create maybe 5 million acre-feet of new water. We could address the future drought that California will have again some day in the future.

Now, what about today's drought? I want to deal with that.

The people of California last November passed a $7 billion water bond. That water bond allows for conservation, replenishment of the aquifers, surface storage—perhaps Sites Reservoir, yet to be determined—and recycling, replenishment of the aquifers and, most important for now, today, money for those communities that are out of water and have no water at all so they can drill their wells deeper or bring in surface water from nearby rivers or communities that may be available.

That is a particular problem here in this area of the San Joaquin Valley and a few of the communities up here in the Sacramento Valley and up in the foothills. We need to provide that immediate relief for those areas, and we need to get on with conservation and some of the money that is necessary in order to do that. The water bond is available. That money is going to be coming out over the next 18 months or so as the State of California moves projects forward.

Immediately, and this is what I hope would be in the legislation that we should pass here in Washington is that we would use those Federal programs that exist today—and there are a multitude of Federal programs that already exist in Federal law, money that is already appropriated but not focused on the drought, not only in California, but throughout the West. And what I would suggest as we move legislation forward—perhaps this will be in Senator FEINSTEIN's bill. I would hope so. And if not there, as we hopefully all work together on solving the problem of drought in the West, particularly in California, that we focus our attention on the immediate opportunities that the Federal Government can presently present to solve problems.

The Environmental Protection Agency has the clean water grant programs. The Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, has the WaterSMART program, which is conservation and recycling. We know that the Army Corps of Engineers has programs. There are other programs spread throughout the Federal Government that, if they were focused immediately on the needs of California and other States, that money could move to solve the community problems.

The clean water grant program could be used to provide water programs for those communities that are out of water—the recycling, conservation programs. All of those have money that is presently already appropriated but not focused; and if they focus that money so that it was in coordination, augmented, and supplemented and ahead of the California water bond programs, you could advance the water bond programs by as much as 18 months. It will take that long for California to move that money out of the bond.

So move the Federal Government in conjunction, in alignment with the programs that the State of California already is planning to do but doesn't yet have the money available. Put the Federal money there. Do the planning, the engineering, the environmental reviews, if necessary, and you advance so that today's drought can be dealt with. Now that is beginning to make sense.

I think we can do this. We need to push aside all of the fighting we have had over these many, many years. Don't take water from somebody, but work on programs to expand the water potential for all California. Don't push aside the environmental laws, because it is, in fact, the environmental laws that protect this largest estuary on the West Coast of the Western Hemisphere—San Francisco Bay and the fishing industry up and down the coast, all the way to the Columbia River between Oregon and Washington.

Don't put us in a situation where we are destined to fight, but rather put us in a situation where we can work together. That is my plea to my Republican colleagues who pushed that bill through here basically on a party-line vote and now headed to the Senate. I ask Senator FEINSTEIN to work with those of us that represent the delta and that have worked for generations and decades on how to protect the delta.

There is a solution. I call it a little sip/big gulp. You can put any name you want to on it. In fact, the Natural Resources Defense Council came up with a similar program that they called a portfolio approach: conservation; recycling; desalinization, aquifers; storage systems, both large and small, surface and aquifer. It is all there. This is not new. This is working together to solve a major challenge to the largest economy in the United States, the seventh largest economy in the world, the largest population—35 million people. This is a challenge, but this is a challenge we can do.

So my plea to anybody that cares to work on water is to work with us. There are ways we can solve and mitigate the current drought and solve the problem for the future drought. It is there. It is not going to be any more expensive than the massive tunnel programs that the Governor is proposing.

In fact, if you took that $15 billion and you were to spend it on building Sites Reservoir, expanding reservoirs to the south, putting in the systems for the underground aquifer replenishment and recycling programs in southern California, how much progress could we make? Well, we could solve the problems for the next drought, and we could mitigate and reduce the harm of the current drought. That is what it is all about: working together, taking the best ideas of one group or another.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have covered this issue, hopefully making some sense of what is a very complex problem for California and, therefore, for the Nation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL SECURITY, THE RULE OF LAW, AND PLANNED PARENTHOOD VIDEOS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be able to address you